



Homestake Mining Company of California

**David W. Pierce**  
*Closure Manager*

03 April 2020

Ms. Ashlynn Winton  
Mining Environmental Compliance Section  
Ground Water Quality Bureau  
New Mexico Environment Department  
P.O. Box 5469  
Santa Fe, NM 87502

**RE: Homestake Mining Company, Grants Reclamation Project, License Source Materials License SUA-1471, Docket Number 40-8903; NMED Discharge Permit DP-200: 7-Day Report for the Unauthorized Discharge from Clarifier Blowdown Pump**

Dear Ms. Winton:

This letter will serve as the 7-day report as required by NMAC 20.6.2.2202.A(3) in the Homestake Mining Company (HMC) New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Discharge Permit (DP-200). The letter report provides additional details regarding the unauthorized release of impacted sludge from the HMC Clarifier #2 blowdown pump as previously notified by email on 03/27/2020 to the NMED and NRC.

Upon arriving at the Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment Plant (RO WTP) on Friday morning (March 27<sup>th</sup>), workers immediately noticed the release of sludge from the clarifier. Further inspection showed that the sludge was being released through the blowdown pump seal. This seal is the same one that failed in September 2019. At that time, HMC ordered replacement parts and received a generic part which was installed since original equipment parts were not available for several weeks. This seal is the one that failed.

The failure resulted in the release of 3-4 cubic yards of sludge consisting of spent lime from clarifier #2. The release occurred immediately adjacent to the clarifier, is contained onsite, and was cordoned off by site personnel pending remediation efforts to prevent contact with the material. Sludge concentrations are estimated from existing data from sludge samples collected in the collection ponds. The pond samples exhibited a uranium concentration of 3,090 milligrams/kilogram, radium 226 concentration of 0.3 picoCuries/gram-dry (pCi/g-dry), and thorium 230 concentration of 0.3 pCi/g-dry.

Spill remediation has been delayed until the week of April 6<sup>th</sup>, due to a positive COVID-19 test on an HMC employee. HMC employees working on April 6<sup>th</sup> will not have been in contact with the COVID -19 positive employee for >14 days on Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>. The spill will be remediated with HMC equipment and the removed material will be placed in EP-1 (final repository). Once the material has been removed, the failed seal will be replaced with an original equipment part and the RO WTP brought back online.

*RE: 7-Day Notification of Unauthorized Discharge from Clarifier Blowdown Pump*

If you have any questions or comments regarding this matter, please contact me via e-mail at [dpierce@homestakeminingco.com](mailto:dpierce@homestakeminingco.com) or at the Grants office at 505.238.9701.

Respectfully,



**David W. Pierce**

Closure Manager

Homestake Mining Company of California

Office: 505.287.4456 x34 | Cell: 505.238.9701

Copy To:

R. Linton, NRC, Rockville, Maryland (electronic copy)

Mark Purcell, EPA, Dallas, Texas (electronic copy)

M. McCarthy, Barrick, Salt Lake City, Utah (electronic copy)

D. Lattin, Barrick, Elko, Nevada (electronic copy)

R. Whicker, ERG, Albuquerque, New Mexico (electronic copy)